

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 3, 6, 8, 9 and 11 are pending in the present application. Claims 4, 5, 7 and 10 are canceled by the present amendment, and claim 11 is newly added.

Applicant notes with appreciation that the Examiner indicates that claim 7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Rather than rewrite claim 7, Applicant is amending claim 1 to include a relevant recital that was previously presented in claim 7. Applicant wishes for the Examiner to note that although claim 7 depended from claim 6, Applicant did not include in claim 1, a recital that was previously presented in claim 6 because Applicant does not believe that such recital is necessary for the patentability of claim 1.

In section 4 of the Office Action, claims 1 – 10 are objected to because of various informalities. Applicant addressed this objection by clarifying claims 1, 8 and 9. To facilitate this clarification, Applicant included in claim 1, relevant recitals that were previously presented in claims 4 and 5. Claims 4, 5, 7 and 10 are canceled, and Applicant believes that claims 1 – 3, 8 and 9 are now in proper form. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully solicited.

In the Office Action, claims 1 – 6 and 8 - 10 are rejected. Claims 4, 5, and 10 are canceled. Of the remaining rejected claims, one is independent, namely claim 1. As mentioned above, Applicant amended claim 1 to include an allowable recital that was previously presented in claim 7. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is now in condition for allowance.

Claims 2, 3, 6, 8 and 9 depend from claim 1. By virtue of this dependence, claims 2, 3, 6, 8 and 9 are also in condition for allowance.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1 – 10.

Applicant (a) amended claim 1 to include recitals that were previously presented in other claims, and to improve its form, (b) amended claim 6 for consistency with the amendment of

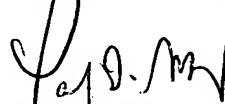
claim 1, and (c) amended claims 8 and 9 to improve their form. None of the amendments is intended to limit the scope of any term of any of the claims, and as such, Applicant submits that the doctrine of equivalents should be available for all of the terms of all of the claims.

Applicant added claim 11 to further provide the claim coverage that Applicant appears to deserve based on the prior art that was cited by the Examiner. A favorable consideration that also results in the allowance of claims 11 is earnestly solicited.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims presented in this application patentably distinguish over the prior art. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and that this application be passed to allowance.

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Date

Respectfully submitted,



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